

strong advocate on behalf of the men and women who are serving us in the military. So if we're looking for a citizen patriot, at the very top of the list we take Jack Valenti for all that he represents.

I will tell you that patriotism is in his blood. I remember reading a book that he wrote some years ago, and I came across a passage. He said, "I remember my white-mustached grandfather, Sicilian, proud, and dignified, and dominant, speaking to me and his dozen grandchildren in heavy accents, thick with an odd mix of Sicily and the Texas gulf coast, and he said, "Love this country, be proud of this country. It's a good land."

Jack Valenti has lived up to the words of his grandfather. He is proud of this country. He is a proud patriot. And I can't think of a better summation than one I read from Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, who also was a warrior, during the Civil War. Holmes said that, "Through our great and good fortune, in our youth our hearts were touched with fire. And it was given to us to learn at the outset that life is a profound and passionate thing. And while we're permitted to scorn nothing but indifference and don't pretend to undervalue the worldly rewards of ambition, we have seen with our own eyes beyond and above the gold fields, those snowy heights of honor. It's for us to bear the reports of those who follow. But above all, we have learned that whether a man accepts from Fortune her spade and will look downward and dig, or from Aspiration her axe and cord and will scale the ice, the one and only success which is his to command is to bring to his work a mighty heart."

For more than half a century, Jack Valenti has brought to his work a mighty heart, and we are eternally grateful for that.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN P. MACKINNON

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2000

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mr. HOYER, and I wish to recognize Special Agent John MacKinnon of the U.S. Customs Service for his exemplary service with the Office of Congressional Affairs for the past two years, including his work as the acting team leader for appropriations since May of this year. Special Agent MacKinnon has provided extraordinary assistance to the Subcommittee on

Treasury, Postal Service and General Government including planning and coordinating important Subcommittee travel to review counter-narcotics programs in the Andean drug source countries, port security and drug trafficking in Miami and the West Coast, and Customs automation projects at busy commercial ports such as Detroit and New York. Mr. MacKinnon also has been highly responsive to the requirements of this Subcommittee in both anticipating and responding to our information requirements, and in facilitating any hearings or other meetings between the Subcommittee and the Customs Service. He has brought great professionalism to his work, and has always contributed a fair measure of his energy, enthusiasm and a dram of Scottish wit to all his endeavors.

Special Agent MacKinnon came to his current assignment after a full and productive decade carrying out investigations of narcotics smuggling, illegal export of munitions and sensitive technology, and trafficking in child pornography. This work included six years leading undercover investigations of international child pornography, many of which involved the Internet. Out of that work, Mr. MacKinnon moved on to be one of the first investigators to work in and develop the Customs Service's Cyber-Smuggling Center. He has developed a wide reputation for his work in the field of Internet investigations, testifying before our counterpart Subcommittee in the Senate, assisting foreign police in international investigations, and teaching undercover courses for State and local police on Internet crimes against children.

Special Agent MacKinnon will soon depart for Boston to take up a new assignment in the field as a Group Supervisor in the Office of the Special Agent in Charge officers. From our perspective, he has served Customs well, and in so doing has done the same for our Subcommittee and the Congress. We wish him all the best in his new assignment and expect to see great things as his career progresses.

LEGISLATION ABOLISHING THE
ELECTORAL COLLEGE

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2000

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce an amendment to the Constitution abolishing the Electoral College.

Mr. Speaker, on November 7, 2000 two Presidents may have been elected.

Vice President GORE received a majority of the popular vote cast that day and Governor Bush may have received a majority of the elector college electors.

Regardless of your political viewpoints, I believe that from this point forward the President of the United States should be elected by direct popular vote.

This legislation will abolish the electoral college and ensure that when the American people step into the voting booth they, and not a slate of faceless electors, will choose the next President.

The Founding Fathers installed the electoral college as a mechanism to ensure only the best and brightest individuals of their time served as our President. This relic of a by-gone era was created because the Founding Fathers did not trust Americans to learn all they needed to know to make an informed decision.

But times have changed and the American people have come along way from those days.

We now live in an era of high-speed Internet access, instantaneous media coverage of international events, 24-hour news stations, and cross-country flights. There is no reason all Americans can't access the information they need to make an informed choice about who they want as their President.

There was a lot of discussion about trust in the recent Presidential campaign—on both sides: trusting people to make their own choices about retirement savings; trusting seniors to choose their own prescription drug plans; trusting women to control their reproductive health. Well, if we are going to entrust Americans to make these personal choices, we must also trust them to choose the President they believe best represents their interests.

Americans do not need to be protected from their own decisions—it's time to trust them.

In the 20th Century we gave women the right to vote, allowed direct elections of our United States Senators, and passed numerous voting initiatives designed to open the polling place to all citizens wishing to participate.

In the 21st Century, we must to sweep away these last archaic roadblocks and move forward to a truly modern democracy.